

POSTPONING FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF VETO MESSAGE ON H.R. 1561, AMERICAN OVERSEAS INTERESTS ACT

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the order of the House of Monday, April 15, 1996, further consideration of the veto message on H.R. 1561 be postponed until Tuesday, April 30, 1996.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

LET US WORK TOGETHER TO PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

(Mr. FUNDERBURK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FUNDERBURK. Mr. Speaker, yesterday President Clinton drove a few miles from the White House and picked up a few logs for Earth Day to try to show his dedication to the environment. I have to ask, why is this President trying to make the environment one of his key campaign issues? He has no monopoly on concern for the environment, just exaggerated rhetoric.

It seems that ever since the Democrats became an endangered species here in Washington, they have turned up the heat on their big-lie campaign in an attempt to take back the majority in Congress. It just so happens that their shameful big-lie campaign is now politicizing the environment.

Mr. Speaker, I want a clean and healthy environment for my children and grandchildren. I support using modern technology and scientific evidence to make sure our environmental protection laws are effective. Mr. Speaker, let us work together to protect our environmental resources, not use them as pawns in cheap political games.

LET US NOT BE MEAN-SPIRITED

(Mr. VOLKMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, the radical Republican majority is still bent on cutting educational funds, especially title I funds. It is mean-spirited. Who does it impact on? Not the local school districts, but it impacts on children; children, preschool children in the first and second grade; children like the two that I visited with and many others in my district while I was out there. These young children, without these reading skills, will be destined to a future that they will not be able to participate in in this great society of ours because they will not be able to read.

The Republicans say that we do not need those funds for title I. I say we do.

I say that the future of this country is bound by the education that our children receive, and it is necessary that they have the skills of reading and math, and that is what title I provides.

I say to the Republicans, let us not be mean-spirited.

DEMOCRATS SIT BACK AND DO NOTHING TO SAVE MEDICARE

(Ms. DUNN of Washington asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DUNN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, this morning's New York Times carried a disturbing report that I believe deserves notice. The banner reads "New Medicare Trust Fund Data Show Unusually Large Shortfall."

Mr. Speaker, the article says the Medicare hospital insurance trust fund lost \$4.2 billion in the first half of the current fiscal year, since the first of October, which suggests that the financial condition of this program is even worse than what was projected by the administration last year. During all of fiscal year 1995 the Medicare trust fund lost \$35.7 million, when it should have been a surplus. But now, just in the first half of this year, Medicare has lost over \$4 billion.

Last year Bill Clinton vetoed the Congress' Medicare Preservation Act, which would have reformed Medicare. The issue is clear, Mr. Speaker. Liberals would rather sit back and do nothing to save Medicare and then demonize conservatives for their good faith effort to deal with the problem. I think it is outrageous that the other party would risk our parents and grandparents to score political points.

MAYBE THE TYPES OF JOBS BEING CREATED ARE TO BLAME

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, Medicare trust funds lost another \$4 billion. Payroll contributions keep going down. Maybe it is the type of jobs that are being created.

Check this out: How about a handkerchief folder, a drawstring knotter, a hooker inspector, a pantyhose crotch closer machine operator supervisor, a muff winder, a fur blower, a wizzer operator, a brassiere cup molder fitter.

Evidently, Mr. Speaker, when American workers become muff winding brassieres fitters, and fur blowing wizzer operators, the Medicare trust fund will continue to lose money. Maybe we better take a look at the issue and also take a look at these jobs that do not pay a whole lot of money.

How about a drawstring knotter? That is really a goal in life.

SHORTFALL GROWING IN MEDICARE HOSPITAL TRUST FUND

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read from the front page of this morning's Cincinnati Enquirer in my district. It says, "Losses Hit Medicare Trust Fund. \$4.2 Billion Shortfall Growing." The article quotes a special assistant to President Clinton, who says the new numbers indicate the need to move forward, balance the budget and enact some changes in Medicare that will strengthen the trust fund. Well, no kidding. This from the same administration that for the last year has been opposing every effort to do just that.

Now that President Clinton's own team that has belatedly figured out that the Medicare trust fund is going bankrupt, perhaps the President is ready to abandon his campaign rhetoric finally and join those of us in Congress who have been working to save Medicare for this generation and for future generations of American citizens. Maybe it will stop the shameless "medicare" campaign and we can work together to save Medicare.

LET US PASS AN INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM WAGE NOW

(Mr. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, what issue is supported by 85 percent of the American people? What issue is supported by 61 percent of Republican voters? Increasing the minimum wage.

So why do we not do it cleanly, without amendments that will clutter the issue?

Mr. Speaker, the last vote to increase the minimum wage occurred in 1989, and due to inflation much of this increase has been eroded. Who does an increase in the minimum wage help? Twelve million Americans. Sixty percent of these are adults over 25 years old; mainly women.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a teenager-plus issue. It is an issue that affects all Americans.

Twelve million Americans would benefit from an increase to \$5.15 an hour, including 100,000 New Mexico workers.

Raising the minimum wage is a critical step in moving people from welfare to work. Someone can make more on welfare than they can by working right now. Is \$8,400 a year sufficient to help a family? The answer is "no," Mr. Speaker.

Let us end the politics, let us pass a minimum wage bill. Let us move on to health care. Let us leave a lot of these issues that need to be done uncluttered with many amendments. Let us pass an increase in the minimum wage now.